FFL Curriculum Policy September 2025

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Statement of intent

The aims and values of Foundations for Life School are focused on maximising every individual's potential to develop into a confident, resilient, critical thinker and skilled young person who will make a positive contribution to society and live as independent a life as possible.

The ability to learn is underpinned by the teaching of basic skills, knowledge, concepts and values.

The school provides enrichment opportunities to engage and enhance learning. Enrichment opportunities provide memorable experiences and ensure there are no limits to the learning environment and a pupils' curiosity and a thirst for new experiences and knowledge.

The curriculum is designed to prepare pupils with the knowledge and skills to access the next phase of education, training or employment. We are committed to the following principles:

- To respect and value all individual pupils and staff
- To provide the highest standards of care and education
- To ensure safety, security and opportunities for success
- To foster pupils' social, emotional, moral, spiritual and cultural development

Foundations for Life School delivers a broad curriculum which is adapted and aligned to pupils' ages, levels of ability, interests and aspirations. It is coherent, imaginative and well-planned, building systematically on prior experiences. There is integrated therapeutic support as necessary and a focus on developing resilience and preparing pupils for the next stage in their lives. A combination of on and off-site learning will be delivered as appropriate for each individual. This specialist curriculum is tailored to our pupils' individual needs and based on a person-centred planning framework. We adopt a holistic approach and all pupils will have access to a broad and rich curriculum.

Overall curriculum objectives are as follows:

- To provide access to a broad, balanced, and coherent curriculum, based on the national curriculum.
- To cater for the specific needs and learning difficulties of individual pupils as described in their EHCPs, providing teaching and learning opportunities at an appropriate level.
- To improve pupils' reading, writing and mathematical competence, allowing access to a full curriculum providing teaching and learning opportunities.
- To provide teaching and learning opportunities to develop a sense of agency and personal achievement in pupils, ensuring they achieve success.
- To support pupils to develop greater levels of independence, motivation, and resilience.
- To help pupils develop the pro-social skills to allow them to build nurturing relationships and interact effectively at work and in the wider community.
- To offer all pupils increased opportunities for learning outside the classroom.
- To optimise the communication skills of all pupils.
- To have gained accreditation commensurate with their ability and the levels to which they have studied.
- To have gained relevant advice, guidance and experience to inform their decisions about future careers.
- To have a positive attitude towards their past, present and future learning.

Introduction

Foundations for Life School is an Independent Special Needs School. The school is in Bootle, Liverpool, and falls under Sefton/Liverpool Local Authority. The school caters for 32 pupils who exhibit a range of special educational needs including, but not exclusively: SEMH, ADHD, Autism, moderate learning difficulties and specific learning difficulties. These needs/conditions have often resulted in multiple mainstream placement break downs, with pupils being placed in specialist provision from surrounding Local Authorities.

FFL recognises our responsibility to provide bespoke education packages for the wide range of needs that have been identified for our pupils. We have an innovative and therapeutic curriculum, that will promote individual core, creative and life learning, to meet the long-term outcomes identified within each pupil's EHCP (Education, Care and Health Plan).

We believe strongly in the importance of basic key skills such as literacy and numeracy and that these form the foundation for achieving progress in all subject areas. The aim is to improve skills that facilitate innovation/social mobility and success in adult life.

Pupils at FOUNDATIONS for LIFE are entitled to an innovative curriculum which contributes to a well-balanced, flexible 21st century approach. We support pupils through Lu-Interactive Playground as well as Virtual Reality (VR), with the aim of reducing barriers to learning. Our curriculum provides consistency throughout the school whilst recognising developmental and age-related aspects of learning. Staff have worked closely together to develop the curriculum. This helps to create a sense of ownership and understanding, within the staff group, of the knowledge and skills that pupils will gain at each stage.

Vision, Values and Aims

We are committed to providing our pupils with a safe, happy, nurturing and motivating environment in order for them to enjoy their learning again in a setting where they are encouraged to reach their potential. At FFL all aspects of school life are designed to inspire and engage pupils. We believe that through our approach we can build on our pupils' cultural capital.

We intend to hold regular Libra meetings for all pupils. The meetings are ideally attended by the Class Teacher, Teaching Assistant, member of the Clinical Services Team (Occupational Therapist/Speech and Language Therapist/Mental Health Practitioner/Educational Psychologist/Assistant Psychologist), member of the Pastoral Team, and member of the Senior Leadership Team. The meetings provide the opportunity for staff to discuss the individual pupil's core, creative and life progress, strengths and areas for development, and work together to highlight strategies to support the pupil in maximising engagement in the curriculum.

Our educational and therapeutic approaches are designed to meet the needs described in each individual pupil's EHCP. Our teachers and support staffs' daily

working knowledge of the pupils will play a huge part in meeting their needs. Through these approaches we can constantly evaluate what the pupils' needs are and what progress they are making. We have a positive focus on life/social skills and our curriculum aims to promote the social inclusion of all pupils as well as to prepare them for the opportunities, responsibilities, and experiences in the next phase of their life whist supporting their individual behavioural targets. From admittance at Foundations for Life we believe in helping establish the skills pupils need for living a full and successful, independent life.



We acknowledge that every child has a unique combination of learning styles and a potential which may not always be fulfilled through traditional education methods. Therefore, we are committed to integrating the state-of-the-art Morpheus Virtual Reality (VR) platform into our teaching curriculum.

This educationally stimulating tool will allow our pupils to dive into a captivating and vibrant realm of knowledge, immersing them in a three-dimensional world of learning.

By employing Morpheus VR, we aim to enhance the cognitive and emotional development of our students. The associated research underscores the promising psychological benefits of VR in education, including the reduction of anxiety, heightened empathy, and increased engagement and motivation. Moreover, this forward-looking learning approach has demonstrated a remarkable improvement in information retention rates, enabling students to grasp and recall knowledge more effectively.

Combining this revolutionary technology with our traditional educational methods, Foundations for Life is dedicated to re-igniting a passion for learning within our pupils. Our goal is to offer a balanced, holistic educational journey that blends technology, creativity, and personalised learning experiences.

Our policy is grounded in the belief that every child deserves an education that is exciting, engaging, and tailored to their unique needs and potential. The use of Morpheus VR within our classrooms exemplifies our commitment to this belief. By embracing the future of education today, Foundations for Life is paving the way for a generation of learners who are empowered, inspired, and prepared for the world that awaits them.

Lü INTERACTIVE PLAYGROUND









At Foundations for Life School, we provide a holistic, comprehensive, consistent, supportive, developmentally appropriate, enjoyable, and physically active learning environment that includes engaging, standards-based, and technologically rich physical and health education implemented in all areas of the curriculum.

What happens at home and school has a great deal to do with whether a pupil enjoys good physical and mental health, how happy and satisfied they are with aspects of their life, how connected they are with others, and how they form a vision for their future. However, the advent and impact of time spent on the

Internet and social media has created an even greater sedentary tendency for children and young people nationally. The situation is even more dire for families from lower socio-economic levels, who depend on schools for access to health and physical education opportunities. As educators, parents, and carers, we have the responsibility to determine how we can meet the needs of the rising generation. Imagine a school where children come to class with anticipation, energy, and positive attitudes where previously they were disengaged, bored, or did not think what was being taught in school was relevant to their lives. Over the past 30 years, mounting research has confirmed that inactivity negatively affects the brain, body, and the ability to learn. Current research connects physical inactivity to such issues as obesity and fitness, lack of social-emotional skills, lack of inter-personal and social connectedness, lack of self-regulation, and absenteeism. Conversely, movement and tactile/kinaesthetic learning are known to produce fewer behavioural problems/referrals and increased health and academic outcomes.

Foundations For Life is the first school in the UK to own and implement the Lü-Interactive playground in all aspects of the curriculum, already widely used throughout North America and Northern Europe it is proven to engage all pupils along with those who have been previously regarded as 'hard to reach.'

Our curriculum seeks to develop:

- Communication
- Core, Creative, Life progress
- Academic attainment as appropriate
- Relationships
- Self-respect, dignity
- Self-esteem, self-confidence
- Self-regulation
- Independence
- Resilience

1. How the Curriculum is Organised

1.1 Key Stage 2

We intend to develop KS2 as a provision where primary school age children are admitted. There may be some KS3 students too. Some will have significant gaps in their education, skills and knowledge, and be functioning cognitively below their chronological age, and will be able to access a primary curriculum to address this.

KS2 will operate on a primary basis, with groups based in one room with a dedicated Primary specialist teacher. Class sizes will be very small usually 5-6 pupils with smaller teaching groups and one to one support as required. Classes are mostly organised by age. For example, there may be classes that include years 5 and 6 dependent upon the cohort and needs of the individual pupils.
Pupils are provided with access to the National Curriculum and our Key stage two pupils will study these curriculum areas:

- English
- Mathematics
- Science
- Computing
- Art
- Spanish, Games, Gymnastics
- Physical Education
- PHSE (incorporating RSE)
- Geography
- History
- Music
- Drama

Along with our own enriching curriculum including;
Cookery
Gardening
British Sign Language (BSL)
Horse-riding
A variety of outdoor activities

Wherever possible, we enter our pupils for external tests (KS2 SATs). Our expectation is that, where able, pupils achieve national expected standard, however SAT entrance will depend on the individual pupil as possible gaps in learning that some of our pupils may have previously experienced may mean they are not at that level yet. We feel that it is important that our pupils, where appropriate, are given the opportunity to experience sitting these tests, in preparation for their next stage in education. This approach allows for learning through exploration, child-initiated learning, promoting independence in making choices and becoming active learners – so pupils develop the 'characteristics of effective learning' in KS2.

1.2 Key Stage 3

The key stage 3 curriculum will be runs on a secondary model and subjects will be taught by specialist teachers. Classes are mostly organised by chronological age, but account is taken of each pupil's developmental stage and identified gaps in their skills and knowledge and timetables can be altered to suit the needs of individual students as required.

Key stage three pupils study these curriculum areas:

- English Language and Literature
- Mathematics
- Science
- Physical Education (PE)
- Careers
- Computing
- British Sign Language (BSL)
- Spanish

- History and Geography
- Business Studies
- Art, Craft and Design
- Drama
- Food technology
- Physical Education
- PHSE (incorporating RSE)
- Horticulture
- Music

Pupils at KS3 are able to gain accreditation, depending on their curriculum pathway. For example, AQA units. Our intent is for year 8 and 9 to gain L1 or 2 qualifications with BTEC Home Cooking Skills.

Those groups at KS3 who are not able to make progress accessing a traditional curriculum based on the national curriculum will have a developing curriculum with a greater proportion of therapeutic aspects to meet their needs and build cultural capital. Teaching in this cross-curricular way encourages engagement as well as developing thinking skills as pupils transfer, deepen and develop their knowledge via a holistic approach to a topic. Trips relevant to the theme embed lessons learned.

1.3 Key Stage 4

All KS4 groups will be taught following a secondary model. One group, whose members may have additional ASC needs greater than some of their peers, will operate partly on a 'nurture' group basis, staying in the same room for some aspects of the curriculum whilst moving around the building for others.

Class groups are organised by age, offering a mandatory core curriculum entitlement which includes both academic and vocational pathways. Every subject studied leads to formal external accreditation commensurate with the ability of the student but taking significant gaps in education into account.

Key stage four pupils study these curriculum areas:

- English Language and Literature
- Mathematics
- Science
- Physical Education (PE)
- Health and Fitness
- Careers
- Computing
- British Sign Language (BSL)
- Spanish or German
- History and Geography
- Business Studies
- Drama
- Art, Craft and Design
- Animal care

- Food technology
- Physical Education
- PHSE (incorporating RSE)
- Horticulture
- Music
- Work-related learning – using Ofsted registered vocational providers where this is appropriate to the interests, aptitudes or future career plans of individual students (Mode Training, For Skills Housing, Activate Body and Mind)

The KS 4 curriculum at Foundations for Life school will often be in a state of review due to the ever-changing needs of the pupil cohort. In-Service Training, curriculum meetings between teachers at different Key Stages, supervision, performance management and staff meetings ensure continuity and progression throughout the school and show that staff are constantly exploring ways to improve, develop and grow the provision, so that they can meet the individual needs of all the pupils at Foundation for Life School.

Many of our pupils, upon admittance at Foundations for Life, will have previously missed periods of schooling or have been disengaged in learning for some time (often due to barriers to learning for various reasons and others caused by their Special Educational Needs and/or adverse early childhood experiences). We therefore place great importance on addressing pupils' social disadvantage and work hard to address any gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills and support them to acquire the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life.

1.4 Therapeutic Aspects of the Curriculum

Traditional Therapeutic Support

Pupils will have access to a speech and language therapist and an occupational therapist (OT) if required as per their EHCPs, supporting their ability to access the curriculum. Interventions can be on an individual basis, in small groups or whole school approaches in the classroom, supported by staff training from therapists or information from therapist's reports. Meditation is also to be practised throughout the school and Yoga will be an optional activity for everyone.

Reward Time

Pupils can access daily reward time by earning points for 'effort to learn' and 'behaviour choices' throughout the day. Reward time is designed to help pupils to make positive academic and pro- social choices without the negative effects on mental health, wellbeing and self-esteem associated with traditional sanctions.

Reward time activities include cooking, sport, craft, animation, board games and table-top games, climbing, swimming, Lego, drama, outdoor activities, film, and many other activities. They are all designed to promote:

- self-confidence and self-awareness
- managing feelings and behaviour
- making friends and strengthening relationships
- learning to manage interactions and improve pre-social skills

- feelings of positivity

Learning Outside the Classroom, including Visits and Visitors, specific Character-Building aspects of the Curriculum

Educational visits and external visitors to the school will play a significant part in our curriculum offer. We believe the best way for our pupils to learn is to experience, therefore we aim for all pupils to engage in learning outside the classroom, to provide experiences which foster awe and wonder in their learning. These experiences are often linked to curriculum topics, however, they can be standalone events, such as:

- Forest Schools
- The National Trust visits
- Visits/assemblies by guest speakers (police service, community police and fire service)
- Curriculum days / weeks e.g. European Language Day etc.
- Art Galleries
- Offsite PE activities e.g. swimming, circuit training
- Fieldwork visits e.g. Art sketching of landmarks,
- Adventurous Activities e.g. Awesome walls, outdoor pursuits days
- Theatre trips e.g. annual pantomime, theatrical adaptations of children's literature e.g. Roald Dahl
- Restaurant/café visits
- Variety of Museums e.g.Maritime, World Museum, Imperial War Museum, Museum of Science and Industry, Catalyst museum etc.
- Library visits
- Cinema trips
- Farms e.g., small petting farms, pumpkin picking.
- Community projects including care home visits, local recycling projects, litter picking in the locality etc.

Enrichment Curriculum:





Our Enrichment Curriculum will provide the opportunity for pupils to develop life-long skills and interests that can lead to greater independence and confidence. This is to be done supporting them in later life, allaying to some extent, potential

further social disadvantage. Our wish is to develop our pupils' skills and talents in a very practical and hands on way. Such activities might include, amongst others:

- photography
- horse-riding
- Kwik Cricket / Cricket
- yoga
- film Making
- dance
- golf
- baking
- crafting
- climbing
- fishing
- board games
- boxing
- gardening
- woodwork

1.5 The e-Learning Programme (e-LP)

Some pupils will be unable to attend the school site, either on a temporary basis or for extended periods. There are several reasons for this: some pupils are affected by emotionally based school avoidance (ESBA) or anxiety-related absence, other pupils may present with behaviours of concern that are so significant that they are unable to attend the site for safety reasons. The e-LP is designed to help meet the individual needs of these pupils.

The core purpose of the e-LP is:

- To provide a blended learning offer for pupils who cannot attend the site on a full-time basis.
- To support pupils and their families and carers to improve attendance and engagement.
- To coordinate vocational placements and ensure good attendance.
- To reintegrate pupils into full time attendance on the school site, where this is appropriate.
- To address issues that may be affecting school attendance.
- To liaise with both internal and external services to improve the situation for pupils thus enabling them to engage in full-time education (e.g. CAMHS, Children's Social care)

The curriculum offer is a bespoke one and is designed in conjunction with the young person and their family or carers. The timetable may consist of a combination of:

- Individual tuition at home or a venue away from the school site, with learning material and assessment coordinated by a subject specialist in school.

• Remote lessons via Teams and our Virtual Reality Headsets
• Lessons or reward time on the school site with peers
• Lessons on the school site in the absence of peers
• A vocational placement with an Ofsted registered provider
• Outdoor education, enrichment, or reward activities
• Welfare visits (including opportunities to address mental health concerns)
• Joint Home visits with internal and external services such as Career Connect, or therapists.



Pupils at Key Stage 4 access the core curriculum areas of English, Mathematics, and Science and are able to access Digital Skills and Health and Fitness accreditation. The level of accreditation will depend on the ability and level of engagement of the pupil. Accreditation opportunities are:

• English, Maths, Science (Functional Skills entry level 1-3 and or Functional Skills 1 and 2)
• English, Maths (GCSE)
• AQA Units
• BTEC Sport
• BTEC ICT
• Accreditation opportunities through Alternative Provision.

2. Assessing the Success of the Curriculum

A successful curriculum will result in high levels of engagement and progress for pupils across all its aspects. Attendance will be good and pupils will progress to appropriate destinations in education, employment or training at the end of Key Stage 4. We will review our curriculum offer on an annual basis and use the following to inform decision making:

• Pupil attendance at school and at lessons
• Engagement, as measured on daily 'points' sheets
• Behaviour, including RPI

- Academic progress
- Destinations post KS4 and any NEET pupils
- Accreditation – AQA Units including accreditation accrued from earlier Key Stages. At KS3 and (where appropriate) KS2, pupils may, for example, earn accreditation in BTEC Home Cooking Skills, BCS E-Safety Awards, ASDAN Foodwise and various outdoor education accreditation.

3. Leadership and Management of the Curriculum

The Deputy Head Teacher/Head Teacher have overall responsibility for the leadership and management of the curriculum. Ensuring appropriate breadth and depth of the curriculum across all subjects and key stages with a small number of pupils, remains both a challenge and a priority.

We are required to teach a broad and balanced curriculum, as outlined in the Independent Schools Standards. We offer the national curriculum, personalised according to need. We believe this to be a national curriculum offer which is enhanced by work-related learning, imaginative use of the local environment and alternative placements, as appropriate for each individual child.

Lessons will be taught in very small groups – 3-6 pupils with a Teacher and a Learning Mentor or Teaching Assistant. We carefully match the qualifications and skills of teaching staff to the lessons they deliver. The level of staffing allows us to support young people very well indeed. Each class group receives some of their lessons in their tutor room. This encourages pupils to respect their environment and take responsibility for caring for it. Our core curriculum will generally be delivered in the morning. These include daily Literacy and Numeracy sessions for most pupils, plus Science throughout the week.

The impact of our curriculum is evidenced by the work that the pupils produce, their progression over time and how well prepared our pupils are for the next stage of their education. Children will be grouped in classes according to a combination of age, core and developmental ability, so the most suitable curriculum is being followed. For example, although a child may be chronologically at Key Stage 3, they may receive a modified curriculum that better suits their needs and enables them to progress to the best of their ability.

Each Subject Leader looks to plan topics/themes to ensure that, wherever possible, cross-curricular links are in place to promote deeper understanding and retention of knowledge in order to support future learning. Teachers are encouraged to consider how pupils' learning, in one lesson, is preparing them for future learning in another. At each stage their learning is building on prior knowledge and understanding. Topics and themes are sequenced with prior and future learning in mind.

Through our medium-term plans, we give clear guidance on the objectives and teaching strategies for each topic. Our medium-term planning follows the national programmes of study. We have adopted the use of various schemes of work such

as White Rose Maths,Jigsaw, Get Set 4 PE, NCFE for Health and Fitness and Digital Skills in order to supplement and enhance the teaching and learning of the Curriculum objectives.

Our daily reading sessions support pupil progress in all areas of the curriculum. There is a strong emphasis on Personal, Social and Health Education and Development at all Key Stages. Programmes are carefully mapped to ensure young people are taught to keep themselves and others safe. They learn about Fundamental British Values, respect for protected characteristics, finance, healthy relationships and healthy living. All of this is to prepare them for a responsible adult life. A comprehensive careers programme runs within and alongside, supported by an external advisor. Pupils can gain accreditation for aspects of PSHE.

Our short-term plans are those which our teachers write on a daily basis and these are determined by pupil assessment and learning. We use these to set out the learning objectives for each session, to identify what resources and activities we are going to use in the lesson and to indicate how teaching assistants are best deployed to support the pupils.

Subject leaders undertake an annual evaluation of their subject area including an evaluation of progress and achievement data. They are responsible for reviewing their subject relevance for all pupils at least annually. Subject planning and work scrutiny takes place as part of the overall school audit process. Subject teachers have the opportunity for peer evaluation through regular staff meetings focused on the curriculum. Teachers will also be formerly observed regularly to ensure the quality of teaching is monitored and continually improved.

Our approach to planning ensures an appropriately sequenced and coherent learning experience in all subjects. There are three documents which inform curriculum delivery for each subject.

1. The curriculum map – this outlines the learning journey experienced by a pupil across all Key Stages until the time that they leave Foundations For Life.

2. The Foundation For Life Scheme of Learning – this outlines the main topics that will be taught over the course of a year and gives an overview of each. It combines some features of traditional long and short-term planning.

3. The Foundation For Life Focused Learning Plan – this is a detailed plan for lesson by lesson delivery of a topic.

4.Homework

Due to the high variance, both in level of need and home environment for our pupils, the setting and completion of homework can be a challenging task. We believe it is important as a reinforcement and extension of what has been studied in school. It also strengthens and cultivates the habit of independent study. However, there are studies that point to the difficulties and stresses homework can create. Stresses that are particularly prevalent in our setting. Therefore, pupils are given a choice of set homework as standard with their being different type of homework on the same topic so pupils can play to their preferences and strengths. However, should a parent/carer request that work be completed at home, then this will always be provided. We will facilitate this request and mark the completed work in line with our Marking & Feedback Policy. However on the part of the child completion of homework is optional as this way we anticipate a greater percentage of completion.

Pupils will have logins to access Lexia, Doodle, Linguascope, Xello and any other online programmes where pupils are encouraged to revisit topics independently and impartially.

5. Inclusion and Intervention

The needs of the pupils educated at Foundations For Life School are varied and often complex. Successful inclusion relies on a good understanding of, and absolute respect for, the needs of the individual. Wherever possible, the school gives all individuals the same access and opportunities as every other pupil (see also the SEND policy).

Each department sets suitable learning challenges, responds to pupils' needs and seeks to overcome all potential barriers to learning. This is supported by:

- The school SENCO/or person responsible
- Learner profiles
- Intervention programmes
- Therapeutic support and other assessments from a range of professionals such as Education & Clinical Psychologists and Speech and Language Therapy (social skills groups, Lego therapy, conversation groups etc.) Occupational health therapy.

6. Safeguarding children

All elements of the school curriculum are underpinned by the need to enable pupils to feel safe and adopt safe practices. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) supports staff in delivering specific safeguarding issues within the curriculum, including how to keep safe, e-safety, anti-bullying, antiracialisation, female genital mutilation (FGM), County Lines and a wide range of awareness raising topics.

7 Non-partisan views

Throughout the curriculum we encourage pupils to respect the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of the law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. Our curriculum is designed to be non-partisan and our staff handbook reminds those with an influence over our pupils to maintain a non-partisan approach at all times during curriculum delivery.